

# Introduction to the East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCCP



LAND ACQUISITION



WETLAND COORDINATION



HABITAT RESTORATION



PROJECT PERMITTING



For the Delta Stewardship Council  
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John Kopchik  
[John.kopchik@dcd.cccounty.us](mailto:John.kopchik@dcd.cccounty.us)  
925-674-7819



# Defining HCP, NCCP and RGP

HCP (Habitat Conservation Plan): A federally-approved plan to conserve and permit impacts to endangered species.

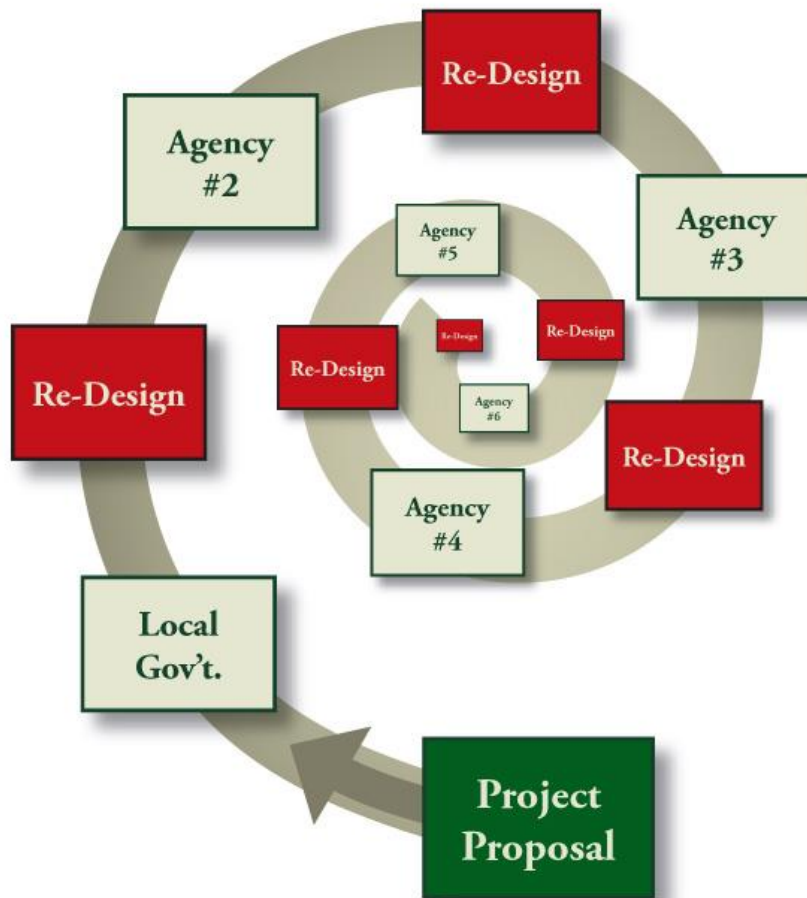
NCCP (Natural Community Conservation Plan): Similar to HCP, but approved by the State.

The East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP enables the County, the Cities of Brentwood, Clayton, Oakley and Pittsburg, EBRPD and Flood Control to control species permitting for their jurisdiction until 2037.

RGP (Regional General Permit): A permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to cover a specified category of projects, in this case projects covered by the HCP/NCCP.

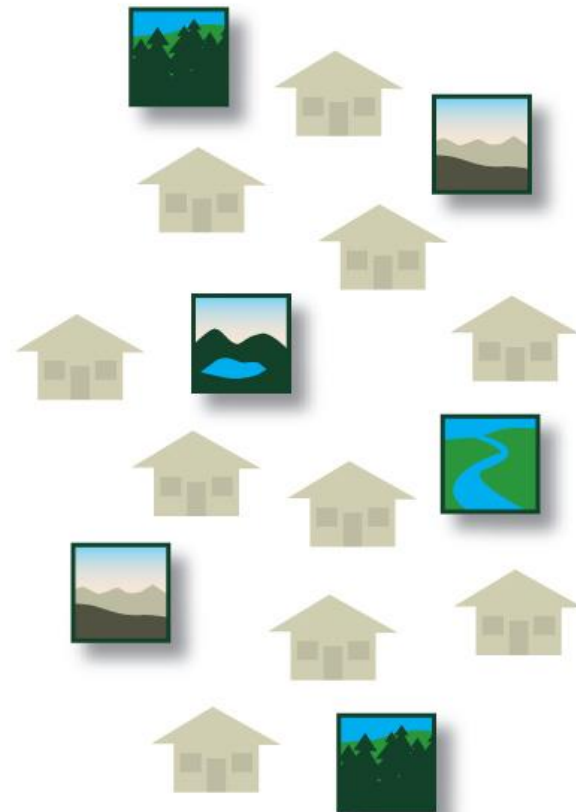
# The problems with project-by-project permitting:

## Inefficient Permitting



*Long and Uncertain Process*

## Ineffective Mitigation



*Uncoordinated and Small-Scale Mitigation*

# Regional HCPs try to address these problems





# Milestones in Development of the HCP/NCCP

2000/2001 Local agencies initiate HCP/NCCP planning process

October 10, 2006 Final HCP/NCCP & EIR/EIS released

August 6, 2007 Approval by all local, state & federal agencies

January 15, 2008 HCP/NCCP Implementing Ordinances take effect

September 2012 After 4+ years of implementing the HCP/NCCP:

- Streamlined permitting for key projects (Vasco Road Safety, eBART, Oakley Generating Station, SR4 Bypass)

- 9,213 acres acquired

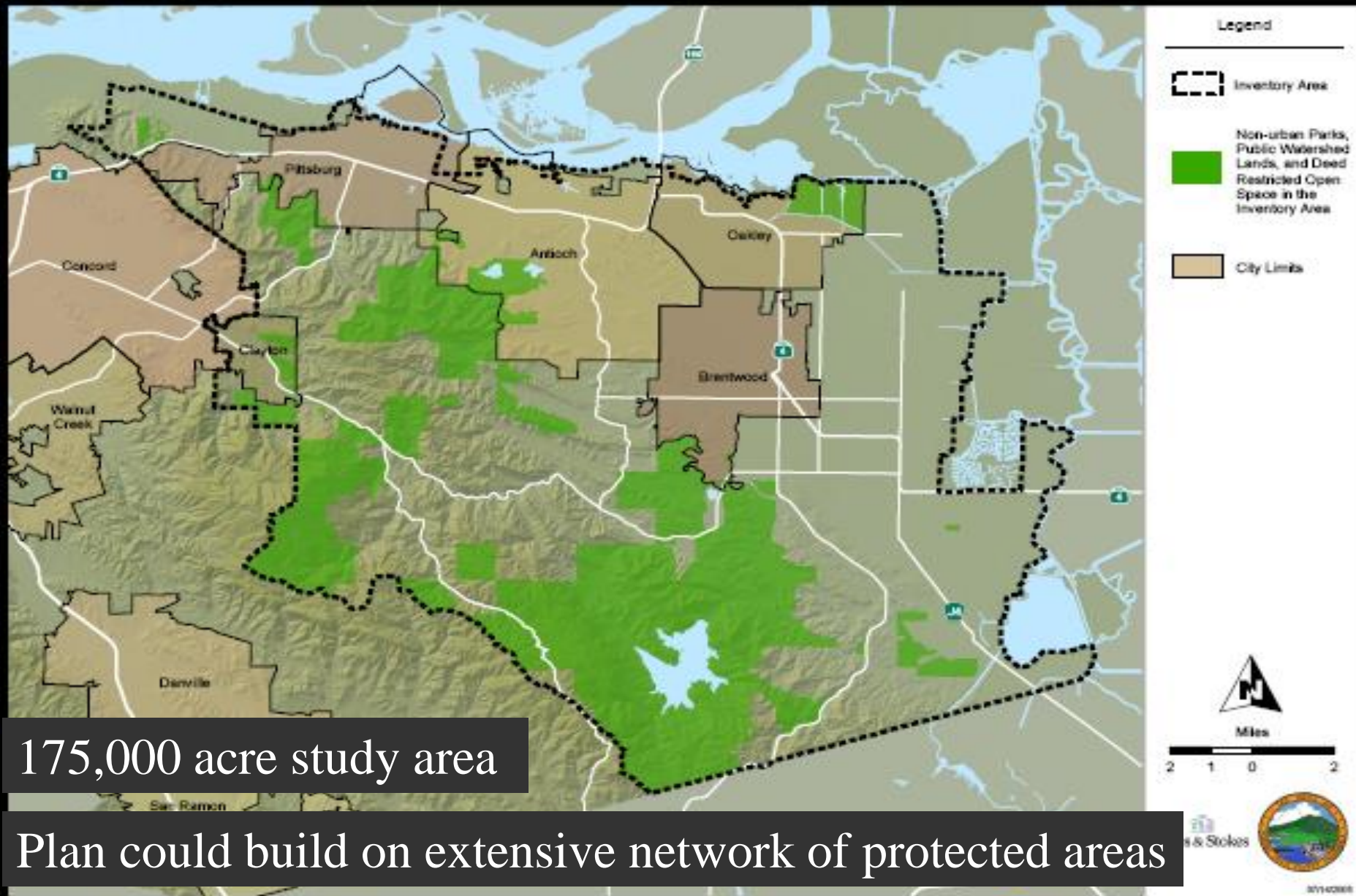
- 7 restoration projects constructed

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approves Regional General Permit in May of 2012



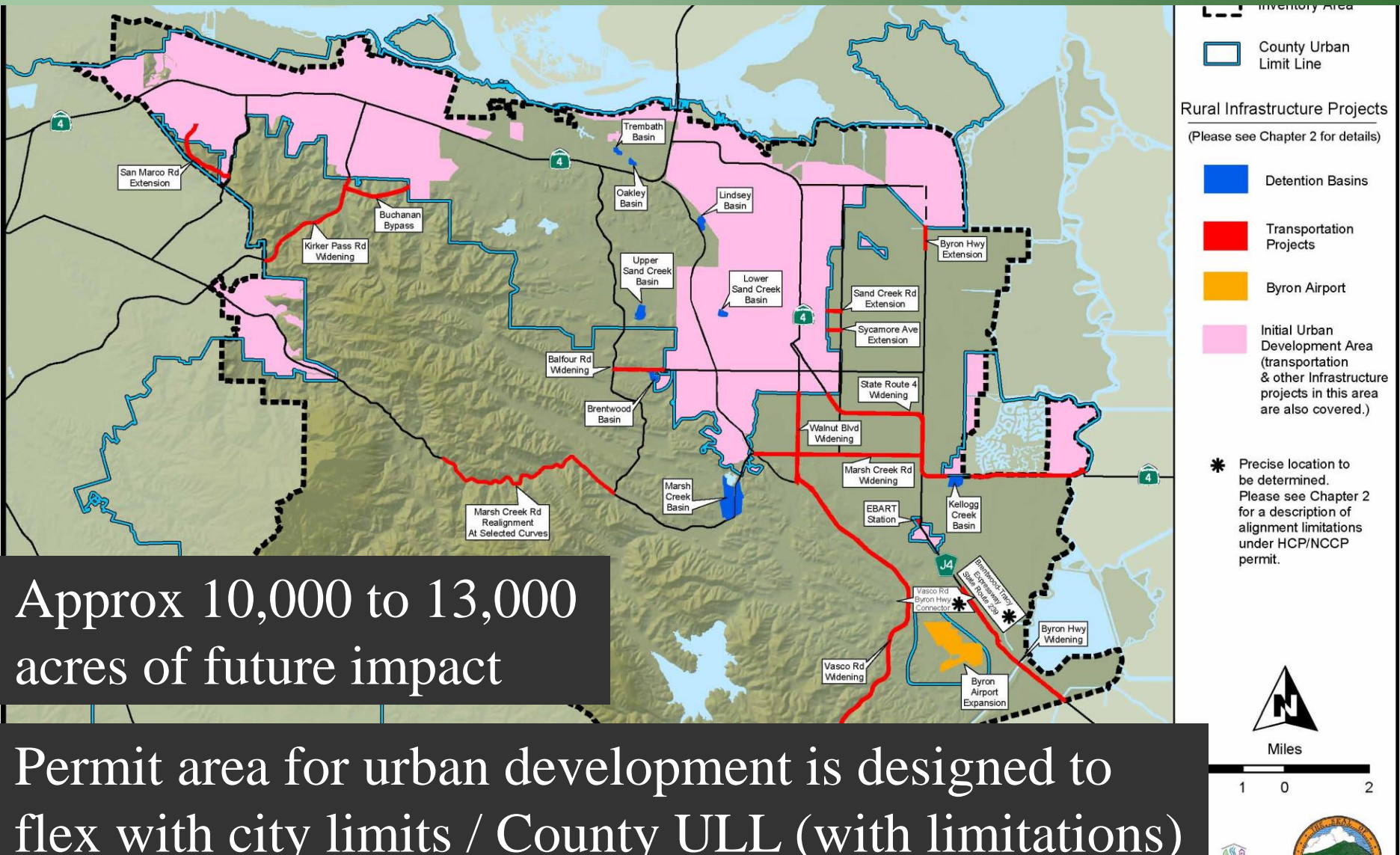
# HCP/NCCCP Inventory Area

Figure 1-1: Inventory Area

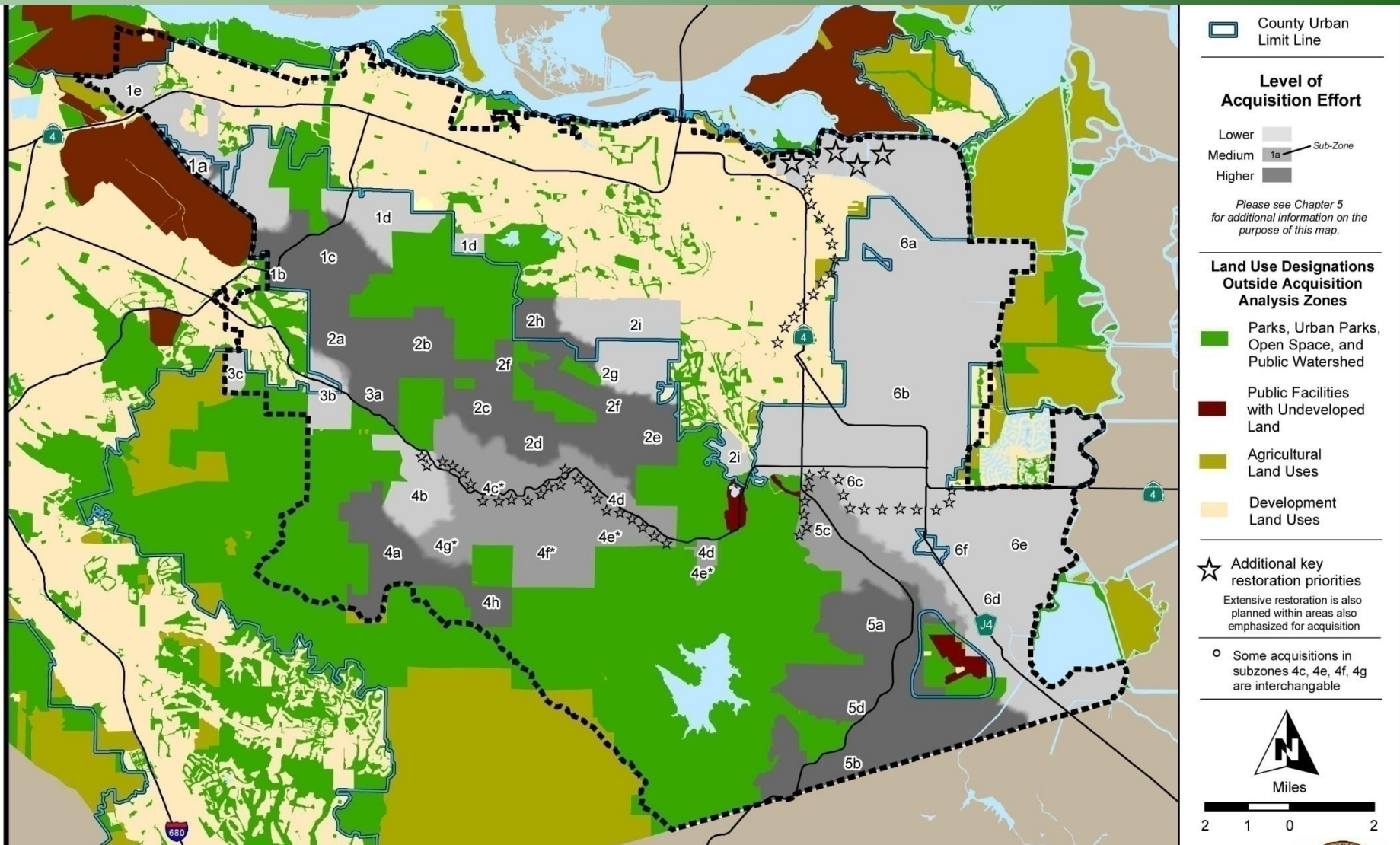




# HCP/NCCP Provides 30-Year Species Permits for Urban/Residential Development and Transportation/Flood Control Projects



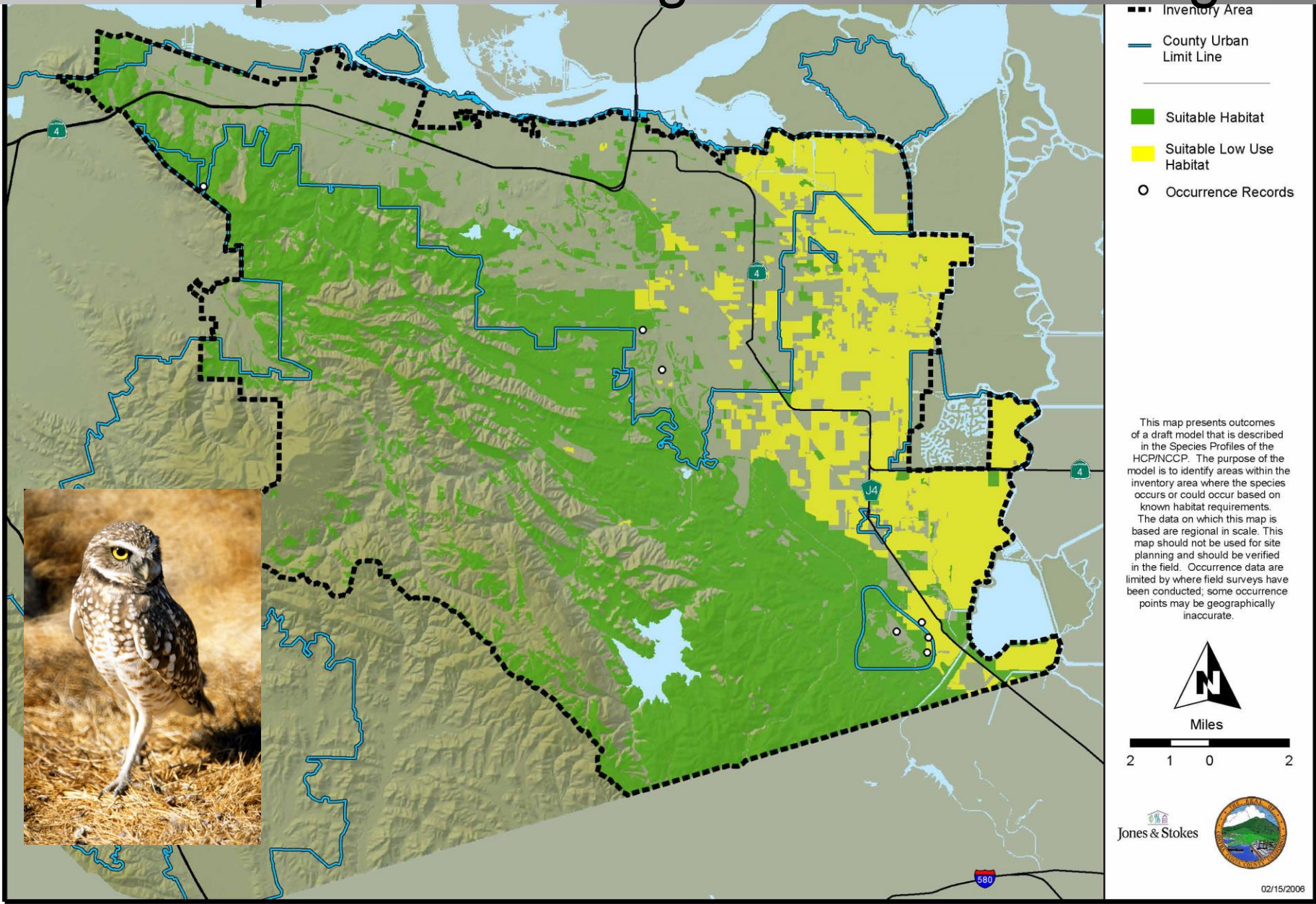
# Acquisition Priorities Under Higher Growth Scenario



30,300 acres is estimate of required acquisitions



# HCP/NCCP provides permits for impacts to 28 covered species including Western burrowing owl



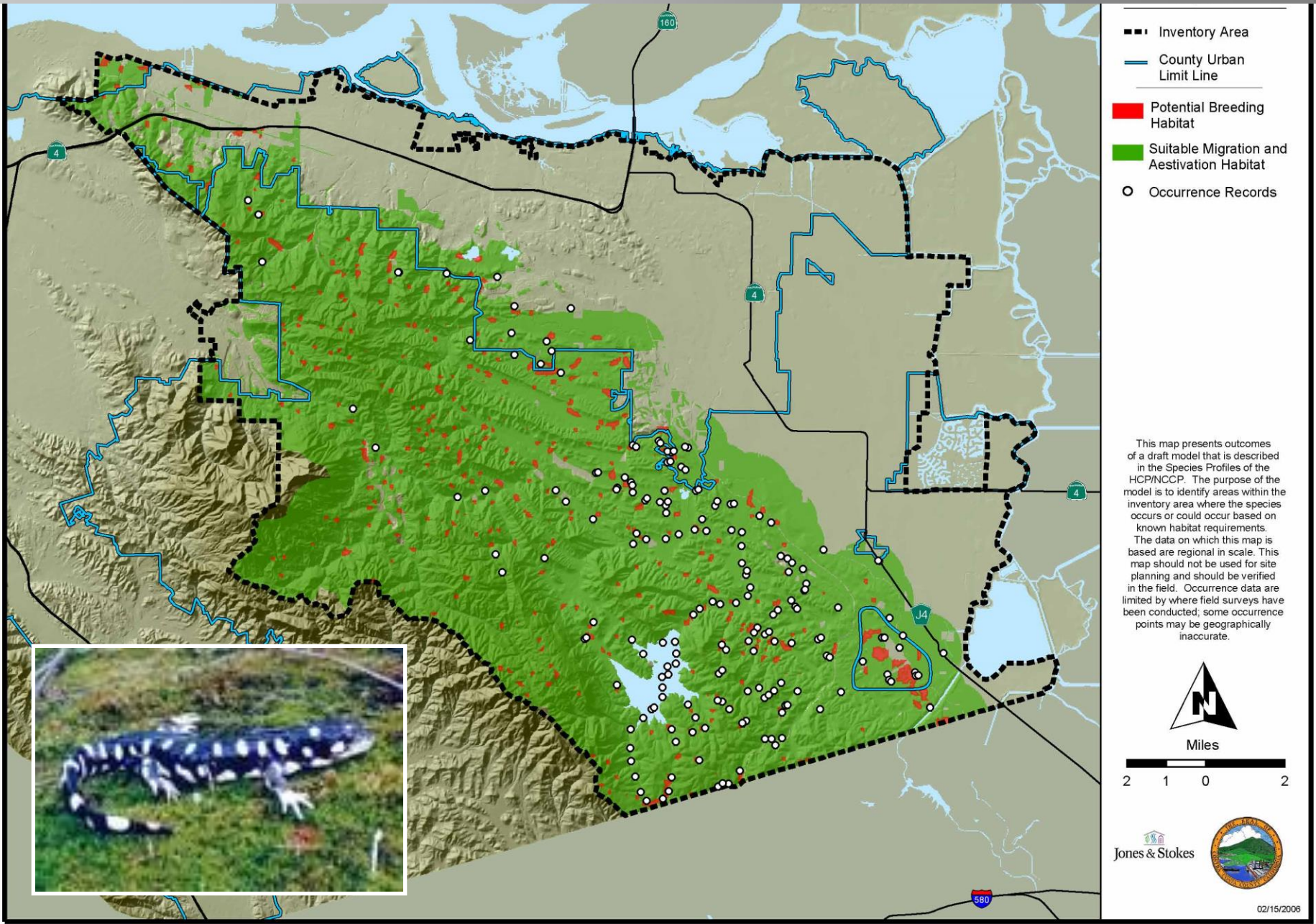


# Swainson's Hawk





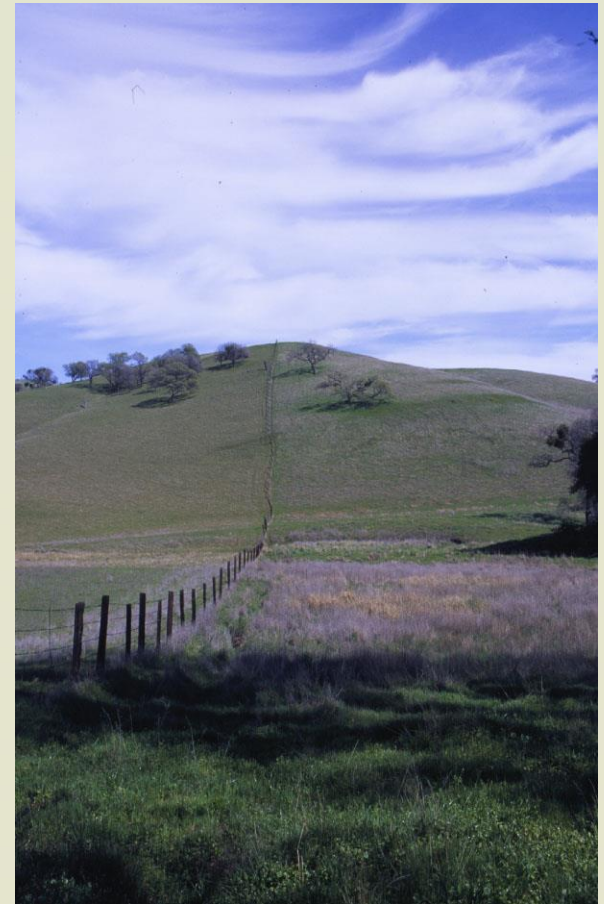
# California tiger salamander





# HCP Reduces Survey, Monitoring, and Avoidance Requirements for Projects

- Fewer survey requirements for applicants (de-emphasize presence/absence surveys)
- Reduces on-site avoidance requirements for applicants
- Emphasizes intensive and long-term monitoring of preserve system to inform adaptive management



# Development Fee Amounts

Zone III (Infill < 10 acres) \$5,574 per acre

Zone I (ag lands)  
\$11,147 per acre

Zone II (natural lands)  
\$22,294 per acre

HCP/NCCP also includes wetlands fee,  
rural road fee and temporary impact fee



FeeZone	(fee per acre)
Zone I	(\$11,919)
Zone II	(\$23,838)
Zone III	(\$5,960)



Miles

2 1 0 2

Jones & Stokes

09/05/2006





# Desirability of Integrating Wetlands & Species Planning



- Wetland & species issues are inextricably linked. Regional conservation planning has a natural community focus.
- Facilitates application of best available science for tricky land use problems.
- Better conservation: to conserve valuable natural resources conservation planning must consider ecosystem processes and watershed function
- Better permitting: more efficient and assured for regulatory agencies and applicants





# First Step to Integration: Corps RGP-1

- *Issued May 4, 2012: The first RGP of its kind in the nation (and region!)*
- Overlays HCP Plan Area & covers “covered activities”
- Larger thresholds than Corps Nationwide Permits (**1.5 acres** waters no 300 foot limit on smaller streams)
- Corps Sacramento District processes for entire plan area
- Mitigation approach consistent with HCP



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

## General Permit 1

BUILDING STRONG®

Minimal Impact Activities  
East Contra Costa County, California

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 4, 2012

EXPIRATION DATE: May 4, 2017

**ISSUING OFFICE:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District

**ACTION ID:** SPK-2001-00147

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this RGP is to provide a simplified and expeditious means to authorize activities in waters of the United States (U.S.), including wetlands, that are substantially similar in nature and cause only minimal individual and cumulative impacts, within the area covered by the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCCP), dated December, 2006. This RGP is part of an overall strategy envisioned in the HCP/NCCCP to balance the protection of important natural resources with long term economic development in the area covered by the HCP/NCCCP. The HCP/NCCCP is intended to enhance protection of important natural resources, including 28 listed and non-listed species and waters of the United States, by coordinating conservation activities at a regional and watershed scale, enabling protection of large, contiguous resource-rich areas and preservation of ecosystem processes and watershed functions. Appendix J of the HCP/NCCCP contains a partial inventory and assessment of the functions and services of waters of the U.S. located within the HCP/NCCCP Plan Area. The HCP/NCCCP, associated documents and other program information are available to the public at: <http://www.cocohep.org>. Definitions associated with this RGP are provided under the “Definitions” section at the end of the RGP.

**LOCATION:** The area covered by this RGP is east Contra Costa County, including the cities of Clayton, Brentwood, Oakley, and Pittsburg, and specific areas of unincorporated Contra Costa County. It is geographically coincident with the “Plan Area” of the HCP/NCCCP (see Figures 1a and 1b).

**AUTHORITY:** The RGP authorizes activities within the Plan Area that involve discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

**ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED BY THIS REGIONAL GENERAL PERMIT:** This RGP authorizes specific categories of activities with minimal individual and cumulative impacts on the aquatic environment that meet the terms and conditions of this permit. Temporary structures, fills, and work necessary to construct an activity authorized by this RGP (e.g., cofferdams, access roads) are allowed, provided such work complies with the terms and conditions of this RGP inclusive of special conditions that the Corps may add. This RGP applies only to HCP/NCCCP Covered Activities, as set forth in Section

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District  
1325 J Street, Room 1350, Sacramento, California 95814  
<http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>



BUILDING STRONG®



# Current Status of Plan



# More than 56 Projects Covered to Date



## Examples include:

- eBART Station at Hillcrest
- Emerson Project in Oakley
- Oakley Generating Station
- SR4 Bypass Segment 2
- 160 Connectors Project
- Vasco Road Safety
- PG&E Reconductering
- Highway 4 at Discovery Bay



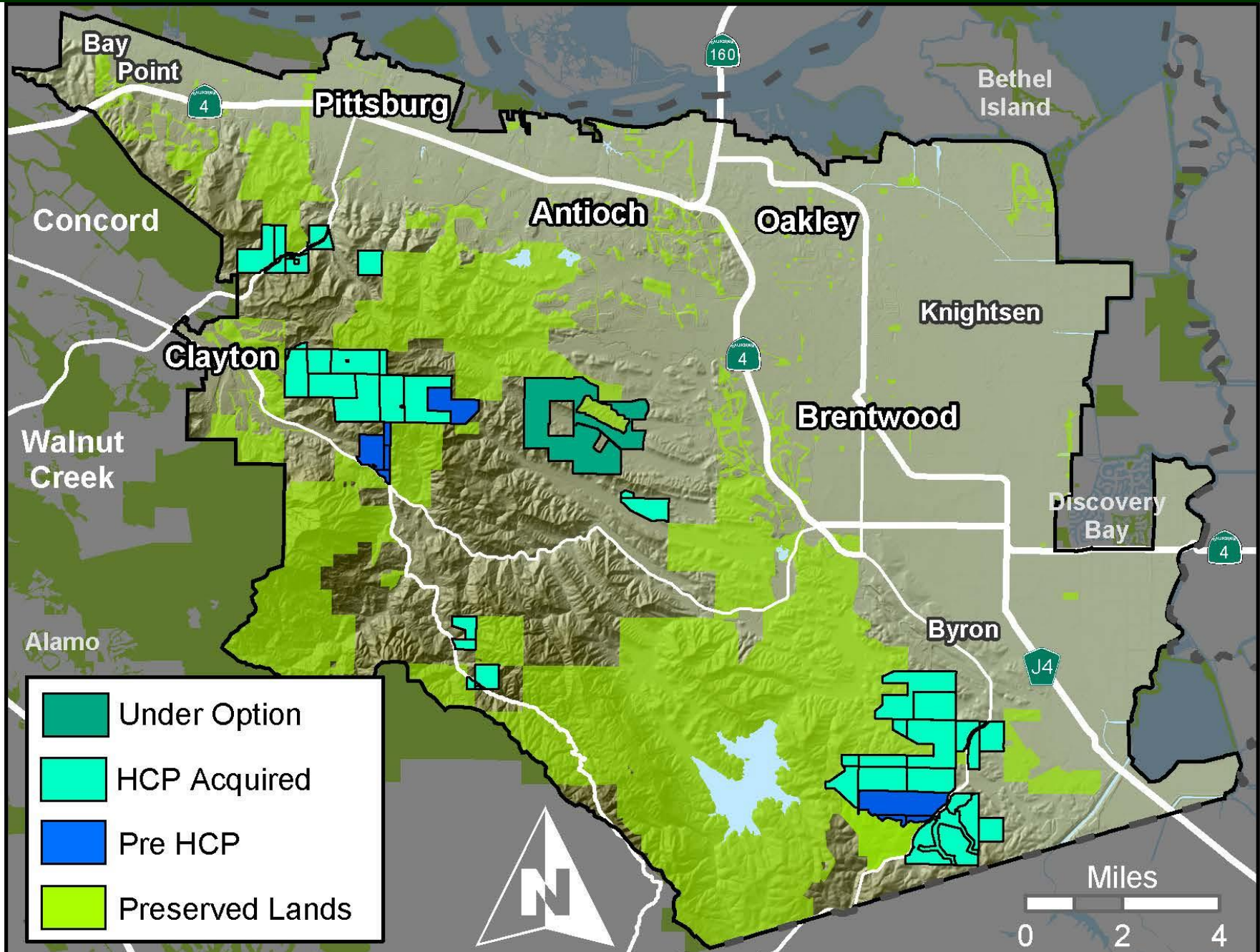
## Statistics:

- 305 acres of permanent impacts
- (includes 1 acre aquatic impact)
- 521 linear feet stream impacts

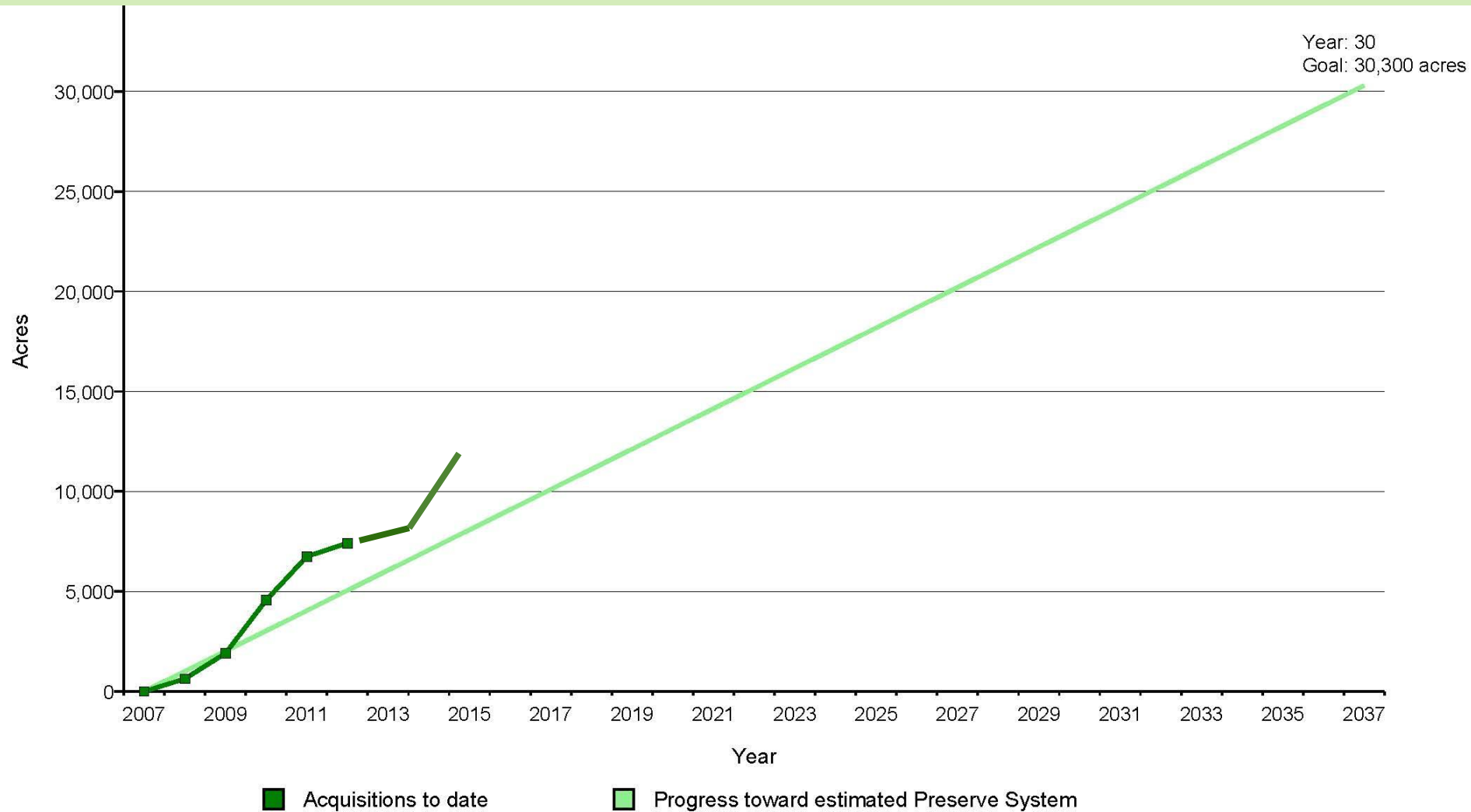




# 12,000 acres acquired by EBRPD under HCP



# Progress toward assembling the Preserve (acres)





# Habitat Restoration Projects

**7 completed, 2 planned for Fall 2014**

2014 – Hess Creek and Wetland Restoration (fall )

2014 – Ang Pond Restoration and Riparian Plantings (fall)

2012 – Vaquero Farms and Souza II Vernal Pools  
and project maintenance

2011 – Upper Hess Creek Watershed Restoration

2010 – Irish Canyon Riparian

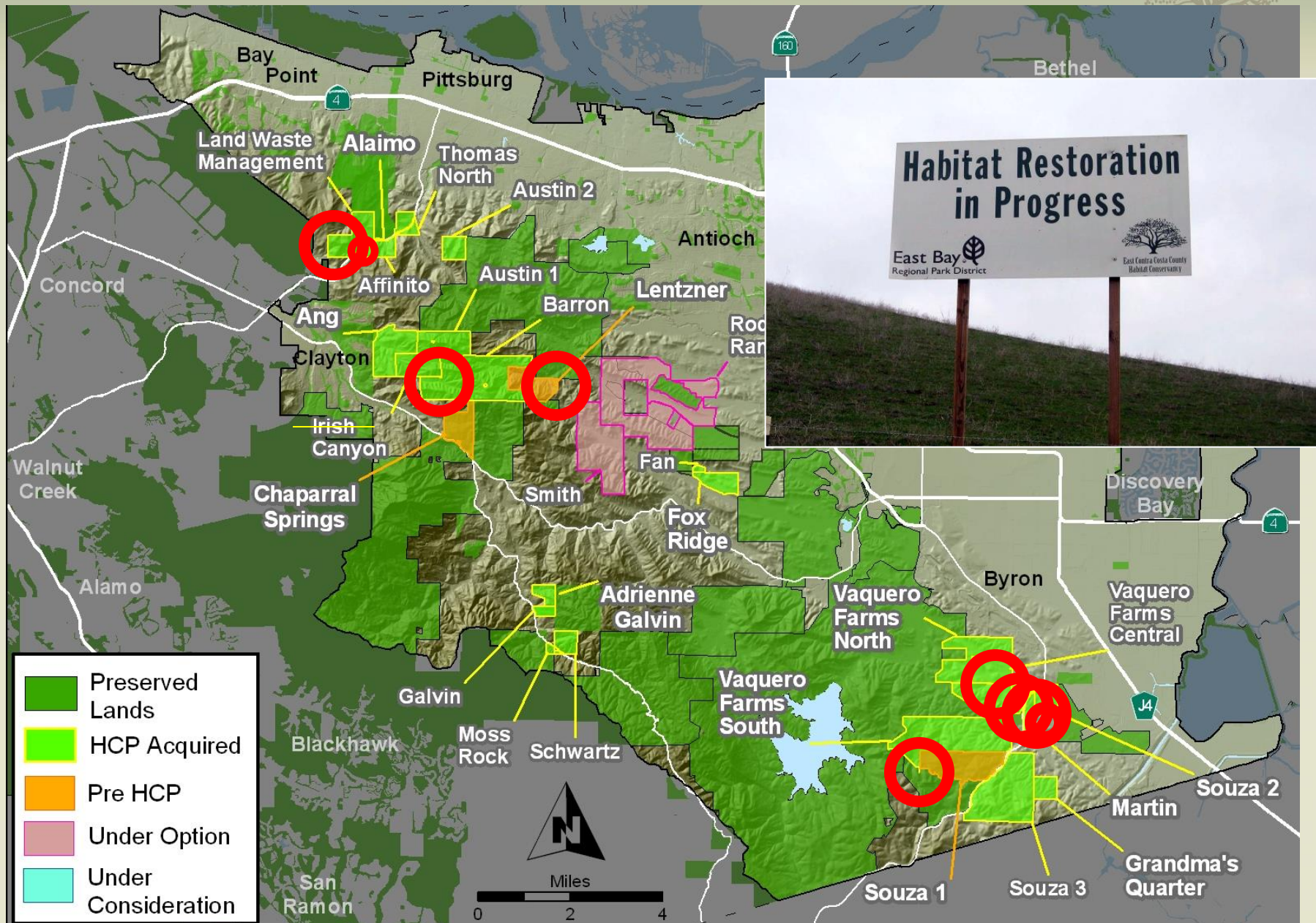
2009 – Souza II Wetland Restoration

2008 – Lentzner Springs and Souza I Pond



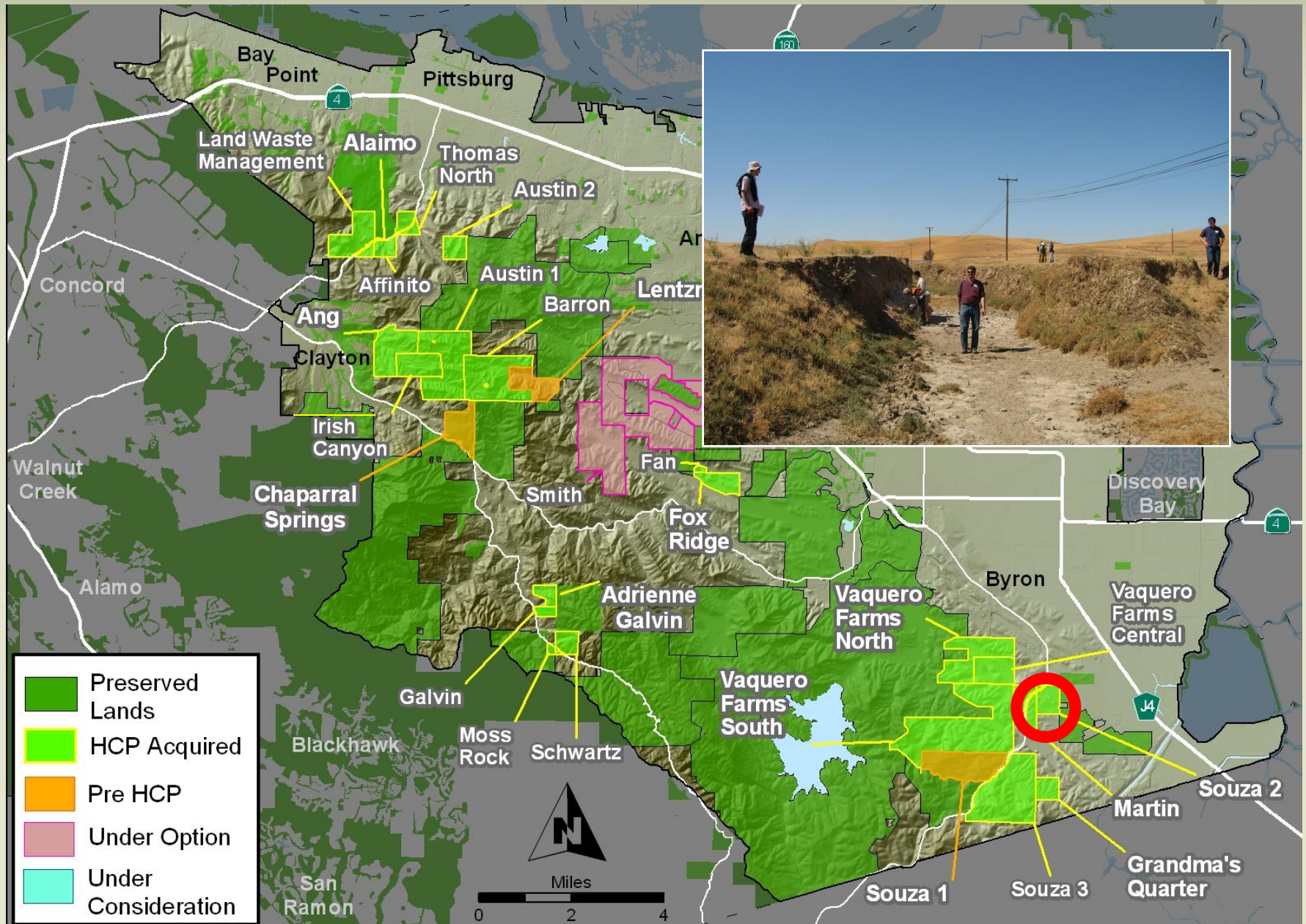


# Wetland Restoration Activities





# Souza II Wetlands (2009)





## Souza II Restoration Project: Schematic of Restoration Design





# Souza II: 2013



**Highlights:** Species on site: Salamander and Frog (and fairy shrimp (fingers crossed))



**Challenges:** Hydrology (rain fluctuations from year to year dramatically change site conditions)& VERY erosive soils.



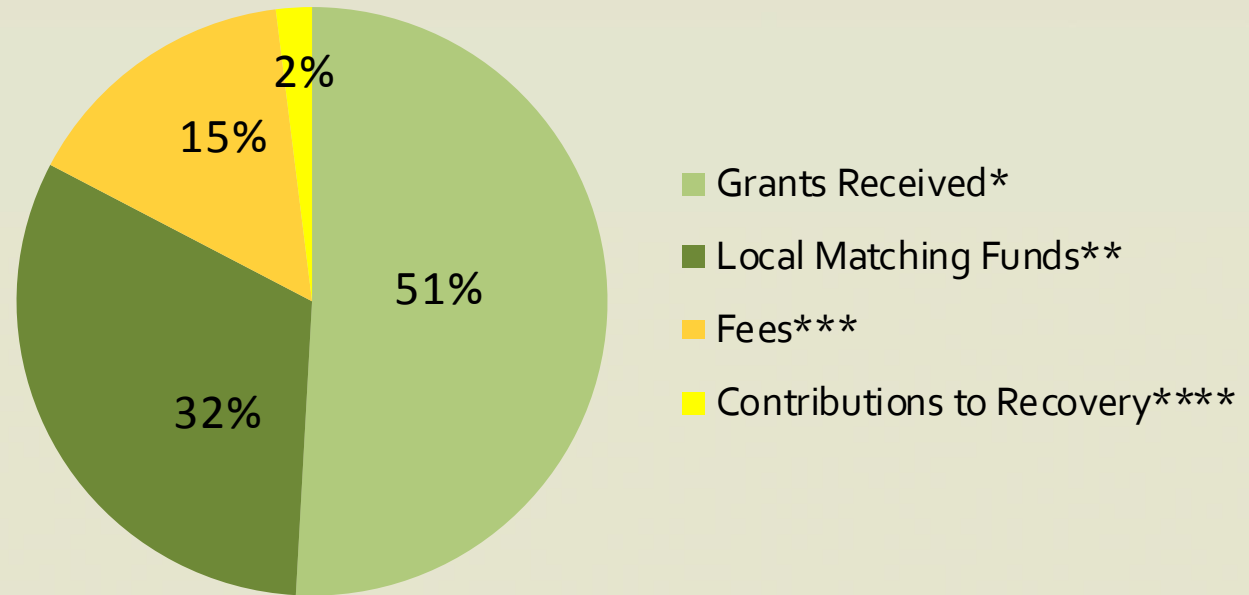




**0.18 acre pond**  
**8.5 acres wetland**  
**3500 ft of channel**



# Sources of Funding for Plan Implementation 2008-2013



- \$59 million spent to date on implementation, including land acquisition and wetland mitigation
- Most of these funds have come from grants and local partners





**Thank you for the opportunity to present!**

